MMR_0550 Howard Garner

I have been a NMRA member since 1965; and eventually became a Life Member.

Like many, I had Lionel in my early childhood and some HO as a teen. I was not a serious modeler until I was in the Navy and had time to visit our Base hobby shop. I started with a few wooden gondola kits by Suydam. When the Portage Hill and Communipaw series in MR started, I got hooked on Central Valley kits and a Porter Mogul locomotive. During my Navy career, I built several layouts, all in the 1900-1910 period.

After Navy retirement and a couple moves, I had an entire basement to pursue a September 1905 period layout. Why that time frame? The grain rush was on and the October Fest beer was ready. This was just before trailing trucks became into common use. Motive power was Ma&Pa 2-8-0's, Colorado Midland 4-6-0's and 2-8-0's.

Rollin stock was a mix of MDC/Roundhouse, scratch build and over 50 resin kits. All rolling stock is correct for my time period (Yes, I count rivets). I first learned about the NMRA when station in Bremerton, WA, That is where the PNR 4th Division has monthly meets. This led to attending an NMRA convention in Portland, OR in 1964.

Since then, I have attended region conventions from the west coast to the British Isles.

I have been judging contests from the 1970's on. I have judged models at the regional and national level. I have given numerous clinics at various regional and national conventions. I have been Superintendent of the Atlantic Division and the Palmetto Division over the years. At the regional level, I have held the Achievement Program Chair and the Registrar positions.

I judged my first national at Birmingham, AL in 1988. I have been on the convention committee for several conventions in the MER and the SER. I was the convention chairman for the 2004 SER Textile Express Convention. I was the Chair of the Palmetto Express 2002 held in Greenville, SC. I was awarded the Master Model Railroader #550 AP Certificate, shortly thereafter.

In 2024, I have started to downsize due to age and a shift to some O Scale and miniature stationary live steam engine modeling.

I remain active in the NMRA at the division and region levels. I am maintaining life memberships in the national and three regions (SER, MER, & PNR).